

Posted by: John Campbell at 2:31 PM The road to reform the earmark process remains a difficult one. As reported by John Fund this morning in the *Wall Street Journal*, the Congressional Research Service (a non-partisan research arm within the Library of Congress) has decided to NOT supply mem... Posted by: John Campbell at 2:31 PM

The road to reform the earmark process remains a difficult one. As reported by John Fund this morning in the *Wall Street Journal*, the Congressional Research Service (a non-partisan research arm within the Library of Congress) has decided to

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supply members with earmark data. The decision by CRS appears to have been driven by pressure from the appropriations committee. This news follows in the wake of recent decisions by the Democrats to extend the deadline for earmark submissions by two weeks, renege on their pledge to limit requests, and prevent full earmark disclosure in the committees. You can read the entire article

here

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"Democrats promised reform and instituted 'a moratorium' on all earmarks until the system was cleaned up. Now the appropriations committees are privately accepting pork-barrel requests again. But curiously, the scorekeeper on earmarks, the Library of Congress's Congressional Research Service (CRS) -- a publicly funded, nonpartisan federal agency -- has suddenly announced it will no longer respond to requests from members of Congress on the size, number or background of earmarks.

"The concern now is that free-spending appropriations committees will use the new CRS gag rule to define earmarks downward. 'We need CRS to continue its reliable reporting so we can save the taxpayers money,' says Sen. DeMint. 'Earmarks aren't chump change. CRS calculated they amounted to \$64 billion in 2006, and in the past they've often been given out as 'sweeteners' to convince members to vote for mega-ticket bills.'"

We need genuine transparency, and legitimate reform. Many Republicans struggled to do this last year, and it appears the Democrat's are not willing either.